Overview of the Incident Command System

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U.S. Initiative: Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System

Vision:

To provide strategic support towards the development of an operational "end-to-end" tsunami warning system for the Indian Ocean within a multi-hazard framework

TSUNAMI
December 26, 2004

ASIA

MIDDLE EAST

Bangladesh

India

Myanmar

Thailand

Phuket Is

Sri Lanka

Malaysia

Maldives

Indonesia

Somalia
AFRICA

Seychelles

1000 mi

1000 km

Madagascar
AFRICA

INDIAN OCEAN

Australia

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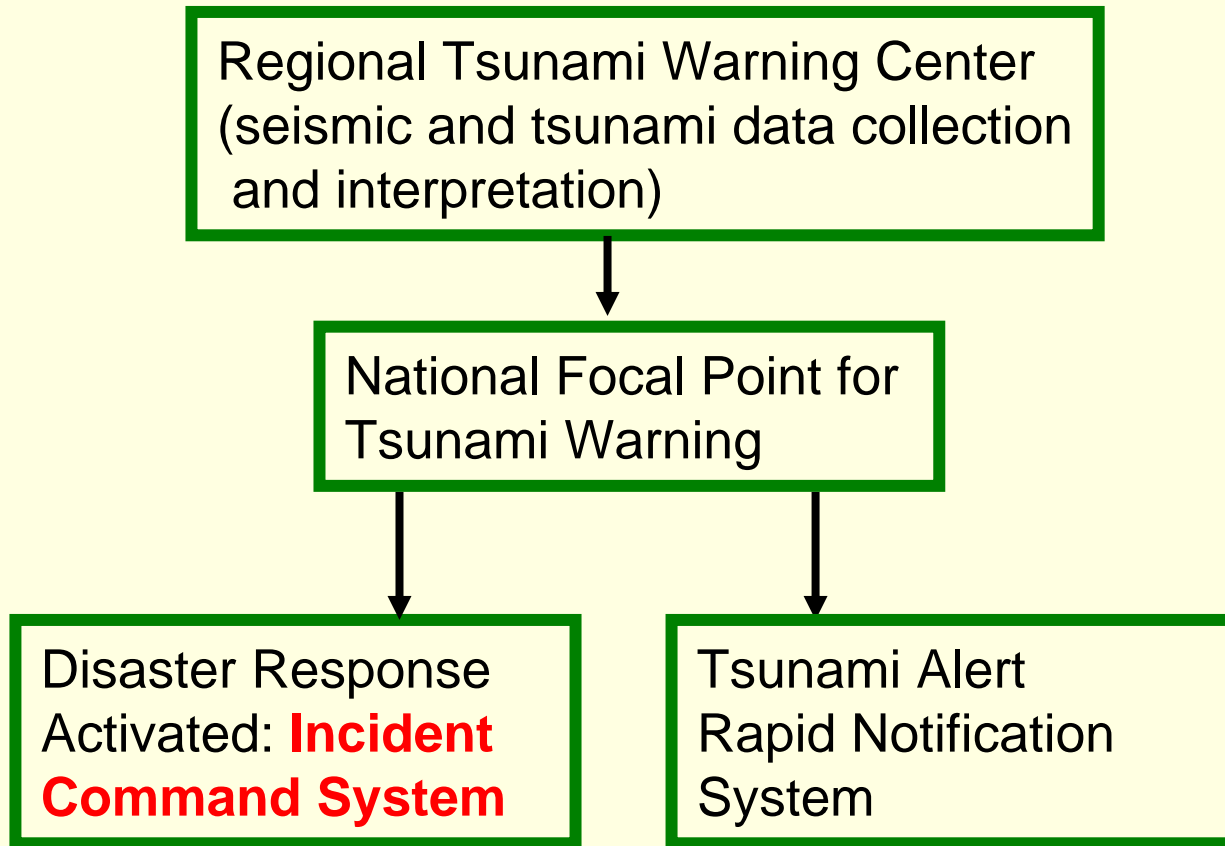*Countries most affected by the Tsunami*

IOTWS Core Program Areas: End-to-end Concept

- Technical Support to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission

- Regional Hazard Detection, Prediction, and Warning Formulation

- National Dissemination and Communication of Warnings

- **Local Knowledge and Preparedness to Act**

ICS in a Tsunami Response Context

Regional Tsunami Warning Center (seismic and tsunami data collection and interpretation)

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National Focal Point for Tsunami Warning

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Disaster Response Activated: **Incident Command System**

Tsunami Alert Rapid Notification System

Global Trends Towards Increasing Disaster Complexity

- Population growth and spread of urban areas
- Greater life, property loss from natural and human caused technological disasters
- Language and cultural differences
- More multi-jurisdictional incidents
- Need to share resources
- More complex and inter-related incident situations
- Sophisticated media coverage
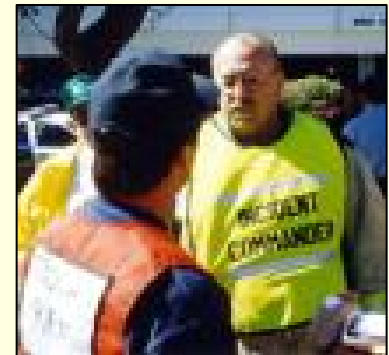- Complicated cost decisions on incidents

1970s Scenario: Disaster Management Challenges in the US

- Too many people reporting to one supervisor
- Different emergency response organizational structures
- Lack of reliable incident information
- Inadequate and incompatible communications
- No mechanism for coordinated planning between agencies
- Unclear lines of authority
- Terminology differences between agencies
- Unclear or unspecified incident objectives

Origins of the
Incident Command System

- 1970s – recognition of the need for a standardized system of disaster response

- USDA Forest Service (USFS) tasked as lead agency to develop a better system

- 1980s - ICS adapted for all-hazard emergency and disaster response

- Now utilized for all emergency/disaster response in the US and introduced to other countries

What is ICS?

- Single standardized incident management system used by all emergency response disciplines

- Multi-hazard disaster response leadership structure for COMMAND AND MANAGEMENT: specific technical competency skills are integrated in the ICS organization

- Provides accurate information, strict accountability, planning, and cost effective operations and logistical support for any incident

National Incident Management System (NIMS) – March, 2003

- Presidential Directive that mandates use of the National Incident Management System (NIMS)

- Establishes a single, comprehensive, and common national approach to domestic incident management, used by all levels of government

NIMS

- **Command and management**
- Preparedness
- Resource management
- Communications and information management
- Supporting technologies
- Ongoing management and maintenance

US Government Structure and Context of ICS

- Multiple agencies and jurisdictions at the local, state, and federal levels

- Recognized need for resource sharing

- Decentralized decision making authority for emergency response – local levels

US Government Structure and Context of ICS (cont)

- Delegation of authority to emergency management specialists

- ICS positions based on expertise and qualifications

- The US has a vast pool of technical response units for all types of disasters

Basic ICS Concepts

- The ICS is a multi-hazard disaster response management organization structure: specific technical competency skills are integrated in the ICS organization

- ICS used on day-to-day basis for routine incidents as well as for major emergencies; activated at first response

Basic ICS Concepts

Command vs. Coordination

- Command is the direct management of the on-scene operations

- Coordination and support functions serve the needs of the command function – generally located away from the site

Basic ICS Concepts

Non-Permanent Organization

- The ICS is activated in response to an emergency

- NOT a permanent organizational structure or secretariat

- During an emergency, ICS qualified personnel leave "regular" positions

Basic ICS Concepts

Delegation of Authority

- The responsible official establishes policy, direction, parameters, and delegates authority to the Incident Commander

- Responsible official generally not at scene all the time but maintains contact as necessary.

Responsible Official

Incident Commander

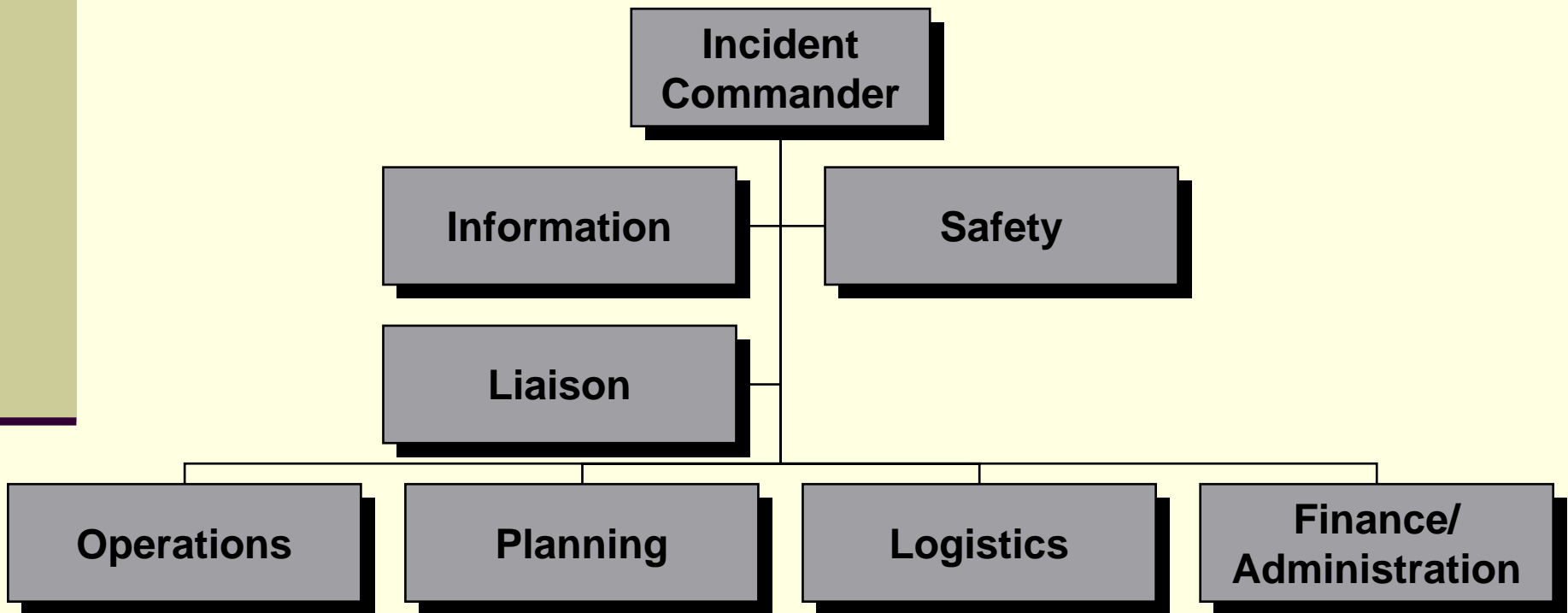# Incident Command System Capabilities

- Provides for a single management system for multi-jurisdictional incidents

- Modular - Allows expansion and contraction depending on size and complexity of incident

- Used on any type or size of incident

Incident Command System Capabilities (cont.)

■ Structured to integrate any type of resource including police, military, technical experts, and NGOs

■ Can be used to manage sudden onset disasters, long-term relief efforts, or non-emergency events

ICS Major Organization Functions

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                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │    Incident     │
                    │   Commander     │
                    └─────────────────┘
                             │
        ┌──────────────┐     │     ┌──────────────┐
        │ Information  │─────┼─────│    Safety    │
        └──────────────┘     │     └──────────────┘
                             │
        ┌──────────────┐     │
        │   Liaison    │─────┤
        └──────────────┘     │
        ┌────────┬────────────┼────────────┬────────────┐
   ┌─────────┐ ┌─────────┐ ┌─────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
   │Operations│ │Planning │ │Logistics│ │  Finance/    │
   └─────────┘ └─────────┘ └─────────┘ │Administration│
                                        └──────────────┘
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Examples of US Incidents Using ICS

- Exxon Valdez Oil Spill – 1989
- Hurricane Iniki, Hawaii – 1992
- Northridge Earthquake – 1993
- Oklahoma City bombing – 1995
- World Trade Organization, Seattle riots – 1999
- Pentagon, World Trade Center terrorist attack – 2001
- Winter Olympics Salt Lake City security preparedness – 2002
- Exotic Newcastle's Disease, California – 2003
- Columbia Space Shuttle Recovery – 2003
- Political Conventions – 2004
- Hurricanes – 2004, 2005

ICS – An Evolving System

- No quick solutions
- On-going evaluation
- Hard work, compromise and commitment
- Commitment to interagency training, simulation exercises, and drills
- Combination of political will and administrative machinery are critical

Courtesy U.S. Government

ICS and the USDA Forest Service (USFS)

- Lead agency to develop the ICS

- USFS fields largest numbers of personnel serving on Incident Management Teams

- International Arena: Disaster Mitigation Programs and Disaster Assistance Support Program

- USFS annually conducts interagency training in all aspects of ICS - international training

Countries in which USFS Conducted ICS Courses

- Canada

- Australia

- Mexico

- Bulgaria

- Mongolia

- India

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (10 member countries)

Countries Using ICS

- United States
- Canada
- Australia
- New Zealand
- Mexico (in transition for wildland fire)
- India (in transition)
- United Nations – FAO and UNICEF deliberating use

ICS is emerging as the "common language" of disaster response globally

ICS in Asia

- India
  - Ongoing since 2002
  - Ministry of Home Affairs – focal point
  - LBSNAA – Indian Administrative Service training institution

- ASEAN
  - On-going since 2004
  - ASEAN Committee on Disaster Mgmt – focal point
  - Regional application
  - Pilot countries – Brunei, Philippines, Vietnam

Incident Command System

Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs
National Disaster Management Division

Proposed ICS Partnership Program in Sri Lanka

1 1/2 year program
Ending October, 2007

- **Phase 1** – Foundation and System Adaptation
- **Phase 2** - Formal training-of-trainers course curriculum in ICS (8 courses)
- **Phase 3** – Implementation of ICS and teams
- **Phase 4** – Regional sharing of "best management practices"

Phase 1: Proposed Activities Foundation and System Adaptation

- Brainstorming workshop and consultations
  - Develop ICS framework document with adaptations to Sri Lanka government and cultural context
  - Develop comprehensive training plan with focal training institution, curriculum, train-the-trainer scheme
  - Develop time line of collaborative activities to integrate ICS into disaster response system of Sri Lanka

Phase 2: Proposed Activities Train-the-Trainer ICS Courses

- Adapt course materials to Sri Lankan context
- Conduct an 8-course ICS curriculum covering all aspects of the system
- Provide training materials for all courses to focal training institution
- Conduct study tours to the U.S. on disaster management
- Monitor first offerings of ICS course by Sri Lankan trainers

Phase 3: Proposed Activities Implementation

- Provide technical consultation to assist establishing system and teams

- Facilitate disaster simulation exercises

Phase 4: Proposed Activities Regional Sharing

- Conduct regional workshop to share best management practices and lessons learned

Objectives of ICS Brainstorming Workshop and Consultations

- Develop ICS framework document with adaptations to government and cultural context, consistent with government initiatives towards disaster management in Sri Lanka

- Develop comprehensive training plan with focal training institution, curriculum, train-the-trainer scheme, and target audiences

- Develop draft ICS document identifying potential collaborative activities

- Circulate framework document, training plan, and proposed collaborative activities plan to relevant Sri Lankan ministries for approval

Thank You

For
your kind attention